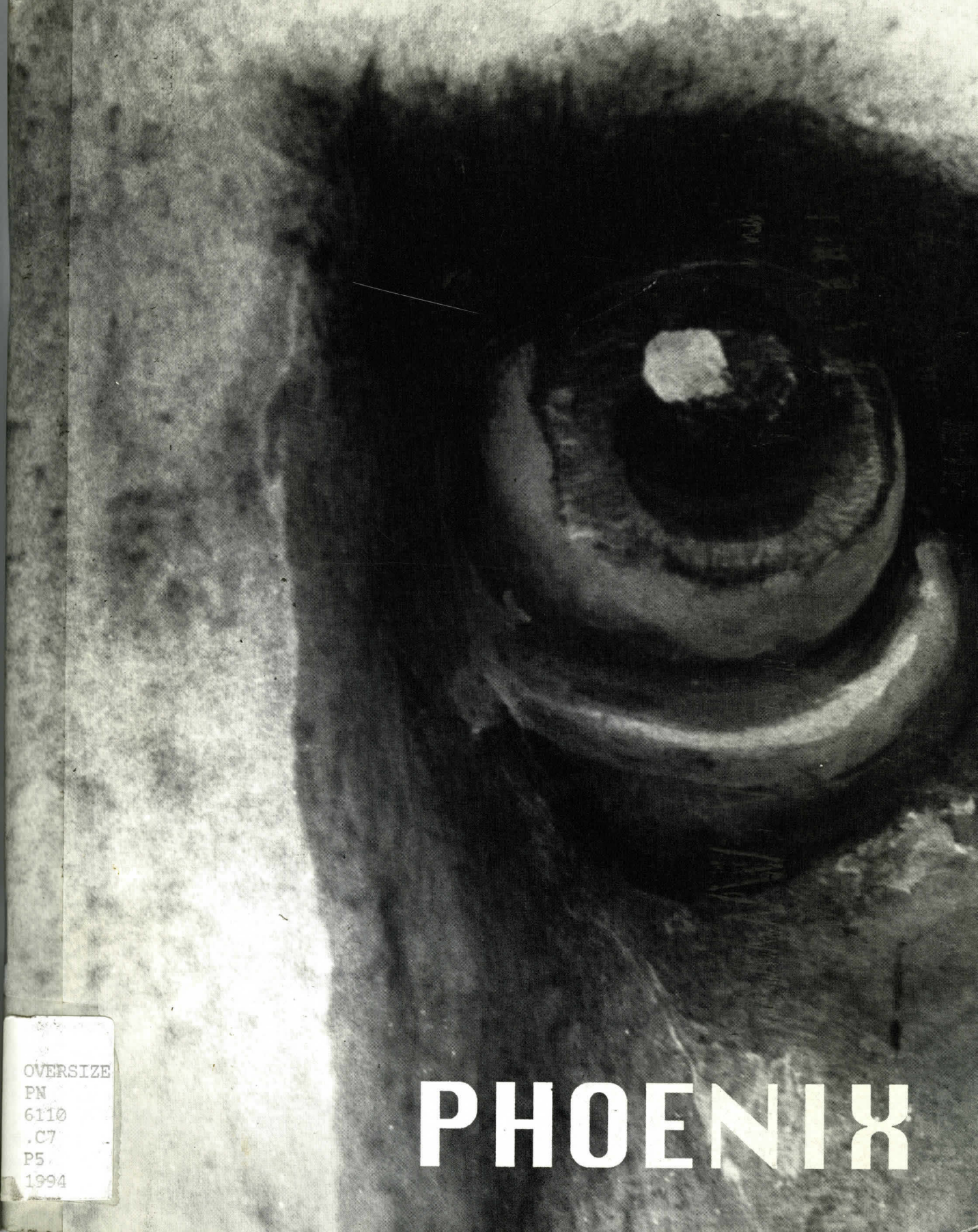




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Reflections and Inspirations



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Untitled by Kathleen Brosnan

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Red Paint

The white canvas spread
covering the space, not big enough
long and inviting
to be touched
only with the painter's mind
no apparent meaning
or maybe - too much
to explain
to reveal
what the brush felt
when it made
its strokes
long and inviting
to feel the dripping paint
so disturbing
to the eye who doesn't
see
what the painter knows
and will not
reveal
beyond the sight
who doesn't search
will never find
what the canvas hides
and the dripping paint
has power
felt only by, the blind.

By Andrea Mihalovic

His Dream

His dream
was for us
to have equality,
for all people
to be free.
No slaves, No butlers,
not even a maid,
not unless you were getting paid.
In that dream
we all
have equal rights,
which led to many violent fights.
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
made that one dream rise,
That's why we must keep
His Dream
alive.

By Tanysha A. Moten



Untitled By Amy Rector

Conversation

Watching the light grey potion
coming from my cigarette
it hasn't touched my lips
only sits there to remind me
I am in despair
so fixated on the smoke
everything is lost
but my reaching hand becomes
unpatient, and grabs
followed by inhale
I put it down again
and condemned only to be watched
the cigarette stares back.

By Andrea Mihalovic

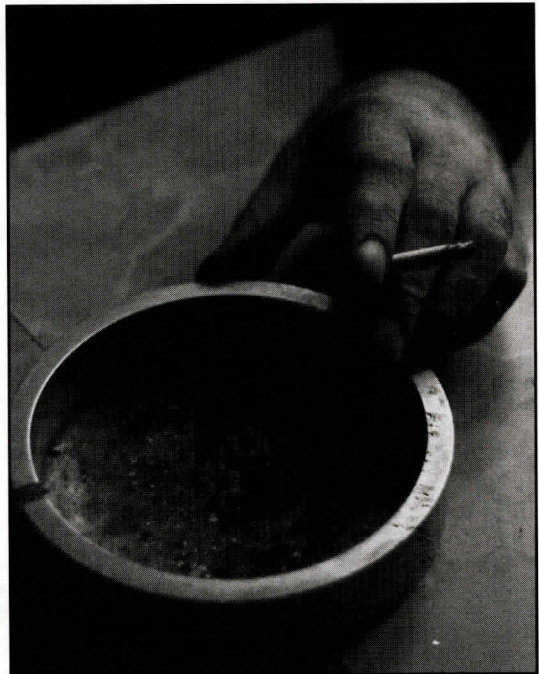


Photo by Kathleen Brosnan

With Thanks

Contented.

I'll bask in the glow
of being in good company,
and idle conversations.

Another memory
placed between pages.
Soft and dreamy,
like velvet petals on a flower.

And like my rose.
With time the image shall darken.
Leaving shadows of rapture behind,
to savor.

But at some point
should hurt and condemnation intrude,
I shall hide in the remembrance,
flipping through pages;
until my mind's eye sees today-
again enjoying our laughters resonance.

All the while
I will thank you,
for your gift.

A happy memory
to brighten
my dark shadows.

By Oni Pendarvis

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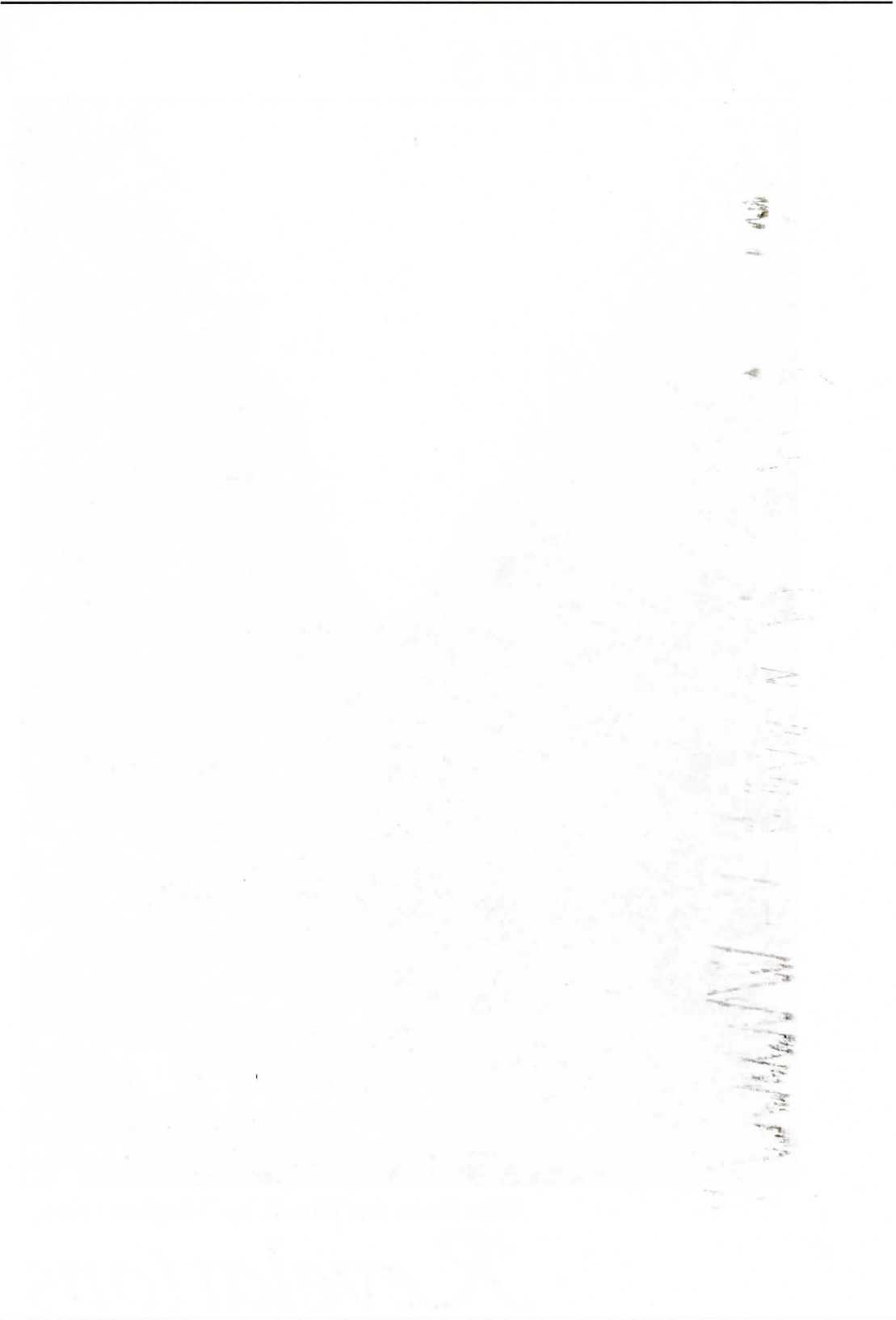
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Nature's



Who Stole the Woods by Meghan Gilroy

Revelations



Winter

*Summer sweet summer has come and gone
Winter has hearkened in its call
Birds fly south to keep their warmth
Will the groundhog see its shadow at dawn
The chill in the air makes us aware
It is that time of year again*

*Gray clouds mask the once blue sky
As the sun hides behind in waiting
Leaves of gold once were green
Stars that dot the sky
No longer twinkle in the night serene
It is that time of year again*

*Shaped like stars snowflakes are falling
Sing songs of holly be merry and glad
Clap your hands warm your hearts
Get ready the mistletoe to hang on the wall
It is that time of year again*

*Light the fireplace in the hall
Fill your cups drink to one and all
Gladden your faces with memories of summer
Prepare yourselves for the port of call
It is that time of year again*

By Arthur T. Zikomo

Ancestral Tree

*A spiral...a root twisting through branches,
a branch resembling a root...
Twisted limbs, nerve endings raw and wrinkled, exposed...
Stars scorch, rain slashes, knives uproot.*

*Greyest brown of hidden graves
falls like dust over my ancestral tree,
ungrowing by the roadside, hemplined, twisting into oblivion...
Wearied travellers lie buried by the circling eye...
Within gnarled wood, the blind worm twists.*

By Bushra Rehman

Trees Standing Tall and Strong

Trees stand tall and strong through rain and snow storms in the winter season.

*They always stand with they're branches lifted up to the sky;
With leaves and without leaves, dead or alive, a tree will stand
Why does the tree stand with its branches stretching out to the sky?
Is it because there's no other way for it to stand or does
the tree stand tall and strong with its branches stretching
out to show humans how to stand tall and strong with their arms
extended out toward the sky to give praise to their God
through their rain storm, snow storm and the winter season in
their lives and not to give up because one day the sun will
shine.*

By Denise Watkins

Smoked Sunflowers

*It's raining Van Gogh,
sunflowers fall petal by petal,
eclipse by eclipse,
sun rims sink in the smoky air.
Saucers of milk-drenched ashes.
toppling lamps,
incensed moonbulbs...*

*Wildflowers, savagely torn
from dampened earth have wilted,
scraggly blond hair hangs
from bent sunbrowned heads.
Clusters of the deceased,
hung roses,
scented corpses...*

*Allah, please don't leave me to wither,
falling petal by petal.
Simply drown me in mother's milk,
let sunflowers float softly to surface.*

By Bushra Rehman

Waterfall

*Down, Down, Down, diamonds of water.
When I look at the lovely droplets falling,
I feel a fear that as they
Fall, I am also
Descending with them spiritually.
The view of the water engulfing at the bottom
Makes me feel that God has gathered my life in
A marvelous way.
As I gaze at the crashing jewels of the falls, I
Think that as they go their own separate ways
The rest is for God to decide.*

By Monica Bonvicini

Snails Upon Leaves

*Ink-stained fingers surround sun-wombs,
rounded seeds caressed by violet skin...
Snail creep silently wombwarbs,
over slippery edges of blossom-limb heavy with dew...*

*While snailish minds dream of being nude
under the sun-stained moon,
exposed blossoms lament their destinies
among sidewalks of wine-stained cracks,
their bodies lying limp and wilted among weeds...*

By Bushra Rehman

Life's



Untitled by Amy Rector

Beginnings . . .

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Joue de Les Enfants

*The water ran down
my hand with urgency.
I mimicked the summer
Leaf after a sunshower.*

*With dirty knees,
dug into the ground,
I looked into the water,
The window
"Who was home?" I wondered.*

*Madame Butterfly fluttered an
"Au revoir"
And went on her way.
I too must say, "Good-bye"
For Play time...
C'est Finit*

By Cyndia Romulus

The Innocence of A Child

*Smiling, running, playing all day
The thrill of being a child is always gay.*

*Watching, listening, mocking each word
A child is merely eager to learn.*

*Whether sleeping, pouting or full of life.
A child is trusting with unquestionable faith.*

*Untainted and naive as can be
A child is pure and simply carefree.*

*Caring, sharing, always wanting to play a part.
The tenderness of a child warms the heart.*

*Hoping, dreaming, fantasizing with glee.
The Innocence of a child is a
beautiful thing to see.*

By Kristen L. Hall

I Remember, Dad

*November winds
still carry the memories
of your blushed cheeks
and numbed fingertips
and the days
when you would stretch
my tiny leather mit
onto your strong hand
and gently pitch
the ball to me.
Your bright eyes would squint
as you lobbed
that miniature moon
high into the sky
as if the sun
were your partner.
Your mouth would round
in anticipation
until that precious sphere
landed in my upturned palms.
And patiently you would wait
with outstretched arms...
wait
for my shaky toss back.*

By Susanne Dwyer

“Crystal Ornaments and Silver Bells”

*My life she gave.
My childhood, she shaped.
Where is she now?
Crystal ornaments and Silver bells,
That's all that's left of her.
Hanging on the tree, shining
Just for me.
I see my reflection in the
Old things.
I see my mothers face.
She tells me to lift
My chin.
“Live on, for me.”*

By Cyndia Romulus

The Wounded Galaxy

*Somewhere in my youth
I used to know
a sacred place
where peace would grow
with peas and corn.*

*It was like a mother
I yearned to have
She cradled me in
moss and leaves
engulfing me in her
earthy smells.*

*She taught me about respect
of the moon and wind
high in a tree
as she rocked me to sleep
and bathed me in softwater rain.*

*The needs of a child
eager to thrive on
the smell of the pines,
the running sap of maples,
the curving backs of fiddleheads
boiling in a pot
on the old cast iron stove.*

*Her boughs held me firmly, safely
While revealing her secrets
of the meaning of life
Nurturing me with her breath
Filling me with countless treasures
Invisible to the untrained eye.*

By Muriel Greenspan

The Window

She often thought of running. But where, and to whom? What if she was sent back? The consequences would be unbearable. She knew the punishment was probably due to something she had done and she tried to make up for it, whatever it was. She did extra chores around the house. She drew pretty pictures of herself telling them that she loved them. It did not seem to matter. Whatever she did was wrong and she was always being punished and sent up to that hot, lonely attic. When the door slammed behind her, she would throw herself on the floor and cry in frustration and pain.

One day, through her tears, she noticed a battered old trunk wedged in the corner of the attic near the eaves. It was like a magnet. She was drawn to it as if by some magical force. Wiping her eyes on her sleeves, she was able to reach the trunk's handle and pull it toward her. The latch, which had not been completely closed, fell open and the trunk lid popped up. Her eyes opened widely at the sight of the magnificent books inside. There were big ones with beautiful illustrations on their covers, a collection of Grimm's Fairy Tales, and Andersen's, and much more. Sitting there among the books, a diminutive Cinderella held Peter Pan's hand. Dr. Doolittle was in the far corner and the sinister Captain Hook was peering out of his cabin door. Of them all, only Rip van Winkle did not look up at her. He was sleeping. She reached in and helped each of them climb out onto the attic floor. They told her how to get to Never-Never Land and Prince Charming danced with her. She was not going to be lonely again. The trunk was a window onto a world of sunshine and civility. The sound of the key being inserted into the attic door sent her small friends racing back to their places and she closed the lid on them just in time. At least she knew that they would meet again.

Afterward, punishment was never quite the same.

The threat of a trip to the attic took on a new meaning. She traveled between two realities and it became difficult for her to be sure which was real and which was fantasy. She was forever wandering off into daydreams populated by the characters in the books upstairs. Try as she would to control them, her daydreams intruded more and more into her everyday world. They became a source of trouble to her at school and at home. Although she tried to concentrate on the tasks in front of her, without realizing it, she would wander off into one of those stories she read in the attic. As a result, one day while she was ironing, she scorched a shirt. When she smelled the burning cloth, panic swept through her body. She folded the shirt quickly and concealed it under the pile of clothes in the basket. There was no way she could have prepared herself for her punishment. The pain of the iron on her flesh was something she would never forget. It made her other scars seem like beauty marks.

When they threw her into the attic, she was enraged at herself, angry that she had been daydreaming, angry at her new friends for leading her astray. Why didn't they leave her alone? She looked at her treasure chest and kicked it, almost breaking her toes. Her attic friends had gotten her into trouble and it should not have happened. She pounded her fists on the floor and the noise shook the ceiling below. Almost immediately, she heard footsteps stomping up the ladder outside. They were coming back. She was terrified. They were going to hurt her again. She did not know what to do. There was no way out--not even a window to jump through. The footsteps came closer and just as they were unlocking the door, the top to the chest burst open. Prince Charming reached out. "Grab my hand. *Hurry!*" he said. And they were gone.

By Jeanne Locklair

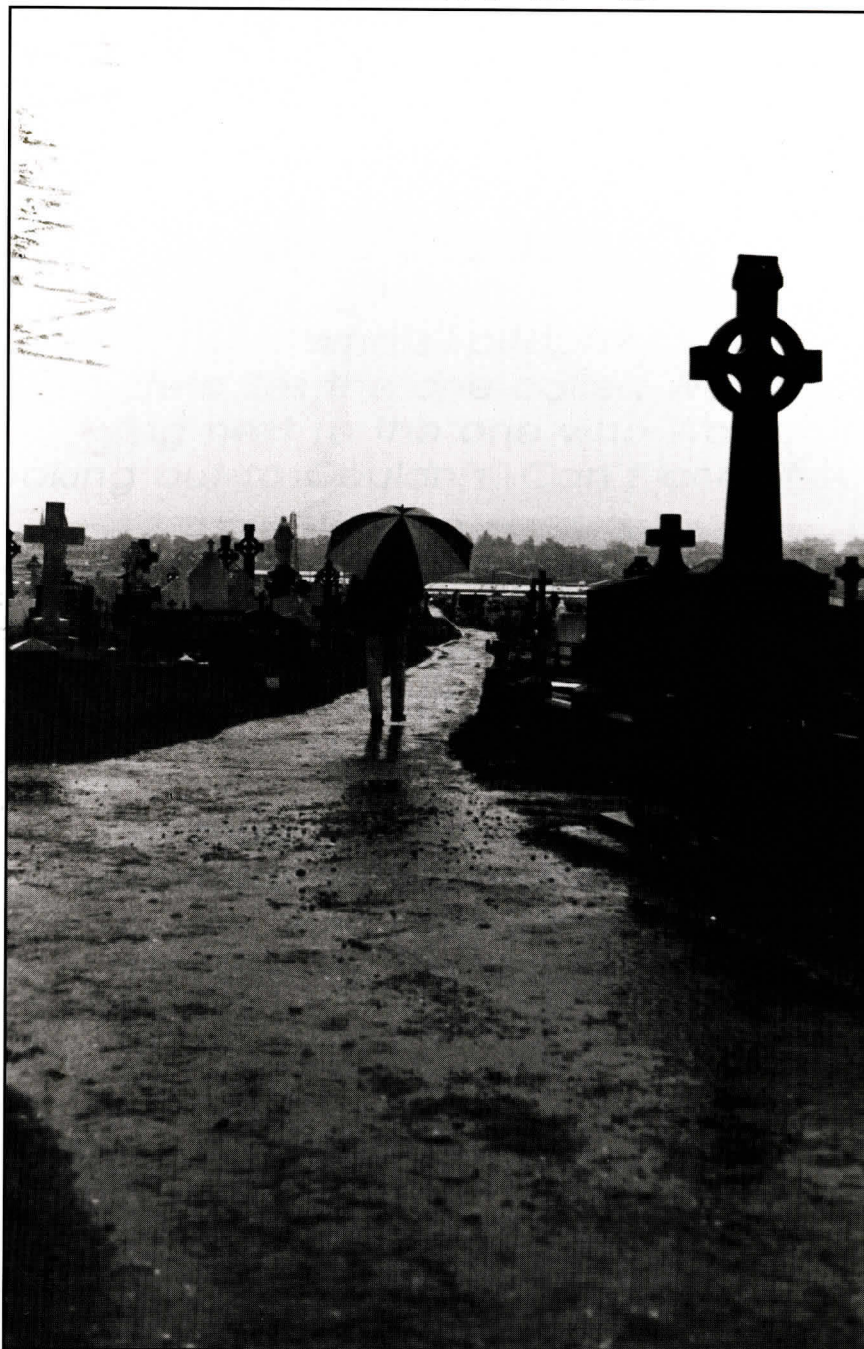
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...Life's



Untitled by Kathleen Brosnan

Endings...

Life's

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Who's Epitaph?

Who's Epitaph?

*Here lies the one called Would,
Lying next to the one who Wouldn't
Looking out to Couldn't, Can't and Shouldn't*

*If Would didn't, he could've been Wouldn't, Couldn't
Even Can't or Shouldn't.
But he did. So here he lies,
Without a voice.
And so, we sigh.*

*As times goes by, remember me
And those alive, who live with death
And soon will die
With the one that takes their lives.*

By Cyndia Romulus

Suicidal Thoughts

In her mind's eye
 she sees the vulture.
Turning, swirling, scanning,
 the morbid scraps.
She seeks refuge behind
 the crooked velvet drapes.
Still, it remains
 in full view:
That horrible thing
 about you, about me.

*

In the dream she is soaring
 above the murky pools.
Knees are broken
 and flopping in the wind.
Searching for the end of it,
 the bottom
Meanwhile, you shout:
 breathe, breathe, breathe!

*

Her life is spiraling
 gravitating toward sharp crevices,
Feeling that dark time
 naked to the vulture's eye.
Worn from the very mechanics of it all:
 she's done.
Now you're hollering: decorate yourself,
 I'm sick of that shade on you!

*

Suddenly, an eerie silence
 fills the air.
All things halt;
 the ride ends.
Yet the vulture, satiated,
 returns to his perch, dozes off, and waits.

By Muriel Greenspan

She Denied Her Wishes

*Phases of the earth fall into the light,
As it circles like a hawk over the skies,
Shadows are cast in the dawn of her sight,
Causing dreams of flight in watery eyes.
But she is nothing but a mere child inside,
Yet she is a woman, along in years.
Running from life, wishing she, too, had died,
Running and hoping, to shed no more tears.
It is over, the light has been put out,
There will be no more flying dreams for her.
She denied her wishes, had she no doubt?
Now, she wishes for another night. Sir,
Have you no flowers, now that she is graved?
Perhaps it was her life you wanted saved.*

By Jeannine Nault

Time in Eden

*Sleepless young man
who stands trembling
beneath the tree
of life...*

*The bark slices your bare back.
The leaves slap your soiled face.*

*Crouched
on a dead limb
you stare
at the horizon and
feel the descending sun
burning your eyes.*

*You throw your body
into the weightless rope.
Arms thrashing
Legs running
in the wind*

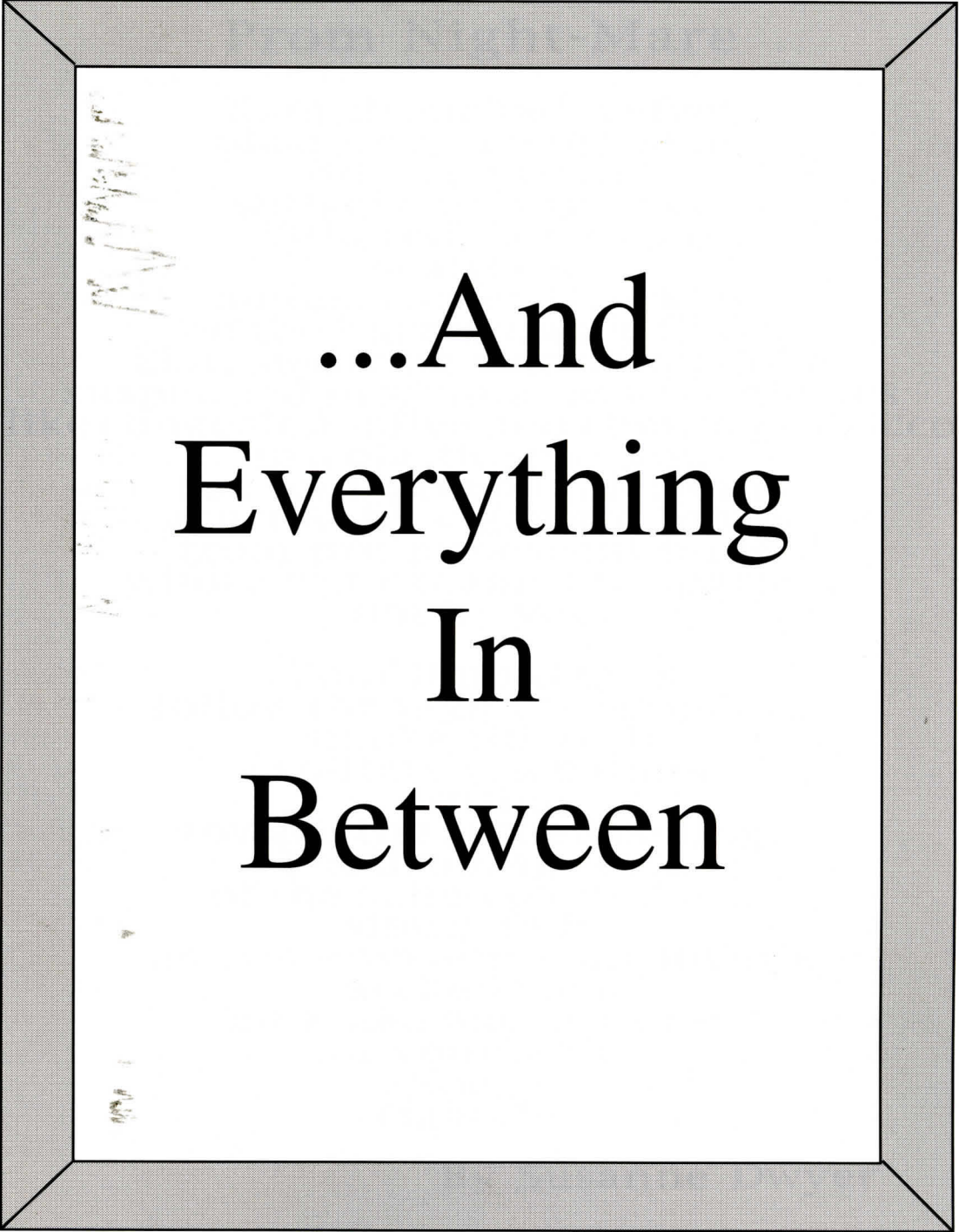
*The call of the birds
ceases to echo
The call of the wind
ceases to resound
The call of your mother
ceases.*

By Susanne Dwyer

Remembering October

When I was small, she was bigger than life
I looked up to her
I thought she was the most beautiful girl in the world
She could have been Miss America in my opinion
She had beautiful auburn hair, big brown eyes and an lovely figure
And freckles
She would know when I was feeling badly because
She paid attention to me
I would see her with handsome boyfriends and get starry-eyed
I would hide behind a tree and watch her kiss them
They would make me feel special too
As I grew older and closer to her age
We became best of friends
She got married and had four children
I often lived with her during transitional times in my life
She seemed so kind and wise raising her children
But I thought I could do a better job
I would say, "Don't let them do that!"
She would say, "I can't wait until you have children!"
She was a gifted artist, full of humor and love for people
We would go for walks, pretend we were a marching band
Sing, and laugh laughs that would come from deep inside
Then she got sick
They found a lump
They removed her breast
Her hair fell out from the chemotherapy
Her skin turned red from radiation
And I got scared
I wondered how I would ever live without her
She grew sicker and weaker until she died
To this day, some times are harder than others
Like when I had my children
That she never met
Or when her two year old daughter
Graduated from high school
I miss her
But what I have finally come to in passing
Is that even though she's no longer here
No one can ever take from me
The essence of who my sister was to me
Like a grafted tree
She grows with me
She is a part of me

By Muriel Greenspan



...And
Everything
In
Between

Handwritten notes on the right margin, including the word "Mammals" and other illegible scribbles.

Prom Night-Mare

Rain-drenched velvet
plastered to ivory skin,
doused heavily
with cheap fragrance.
Withered rose petals
scattered
amidst confetti freckles
on the barren dance floor.
Flat, medicine-warm Diet Coke
suspended in simulated wine glasses
like congealed saliva and chewing tobacco
in a plastic spittoon.
Pea soup green tablecloths
scarred by cigarette burns
from pre-pubescent boys,
whose wet dreams are sparked
not by you.

Your limpid eyes
follow through the stagnant,
smoke-filled air
a solitary red balloon
drifting
toward the arched ceiling.
The droning voice
of the acne-covered d.j.
slowly fades
as you envision your lover's
arched back
and take one last drag
of your stale,
soggy
cigarette.

By Susanne Dwyer

El Aro

Un gastado aro:
el residuo de una promesa
de eterna lealtad a un resultado
del dividendo y divisor
de un alturismo que va más allá
de los sermones de domingo,
de las omniscientes estadísticas,
de la buena y mala lengua del extraño...
Una preciosa prenda,
Garcilaso, es lo que queda
de una preciosa vida, cortada
por aquel colmillo de víbora
que mordió la presa equivocada.
¡Oh, dulzura! Le has quitado el placer
de sus ojos, amor de primavera
que nunca marchitó
entre el ciego invierno de esta era;
le has conjurado a vivir
cual isla en un gran lago,
pues Satanás se ha apoderado
de fuego vestal y en maldición
lo ha transformado.

By Suzannette Lebrón

The Wedding Band (El Aro Translation)

A trite band:

the residue of a promise
of everlasting loyalty to a result
of the dividend and divider
of an altruism that strikes beyond
the Sunday school sermons,
the omniscient statistics,
the blessed and damned tongue of the
stranger...

A treasured jewel, Garcilaso, has been left
from a precious life, which was blinded
by the yonder eyetooth of the rattlesnake
after biting the wrong prey.

Oh, sweetness! You have taken the pleasure
out of his eyes, a love a spring
never withered
within the blind winter of this age;
you have conjured him to live
as an isle within a great lake,
since Satan has seized
the Vestal flame, and has transformed it
into damnation.

By Suzannete Lebron

(For My Parents)

Giving, Giving, Giving,
Until there's nothing left
so it's
Going, Going, Gone.

Why shouldn't you receive?
Why can't you be selfish like Midas
so I could drown in self-pity
and not self-contempt?
I want to give to you,
like you have to me.
I want everything you've ever
wanted for yourselves
to come true.

Health, Archaeologist, Pizza or Retirement-
You will have it,
if I have anything accomplished in my life.
You give your last dollar
in your empty wallets
to me.

How can I say "Thank You?"
"I Love You?"
My only assurance in my debts
is that
you will receive
more in heaven
than you ever could
from me.

By Laurie Trombley

Remnants

Used condoms clutter cheap motel carpets
Rust lipstick and sweat smear on satin sheets
Sweet blood and sweat stain cold hospital sheets
Etched echoes haunt empty, sterile hallways
Stretch marks and sutures streak bloated bellies
Puréed peas form fresh freckles on fringed bibs
Dried-up drool dwells on mothers' slouched
 shoulders
Fingerprints plague grimy grade school windows
Abused hopscotch frames consume cracked
 sidewalks
Prom pictures lay dormant in locked "hope"
 chests
Tears mix with smudged mascara on blushed
 cheeks
Coffee mugs bear rings on ink-soaked blotters
Smoke from squelched cigarettes drifts from torn
 soles
Ashes in unmarked urns rage in silence.

By Susanne Dwyer

For the Memory of Sara Ann Wood

One Day, in the comfort of the home
I used to take for granted, I wept.

The girl who was stolen,
snatched up like a precious seashell
washed ashore,
and then swept away by the tide-
is gone.

He took her from those she loved
and then, in a moment
of rage or sick sense of passion,
he took her from this universe altogether.
She is gone.

There will be no more
boyfriends or heart-aches,
no deep school-girl cries
into the pillow at night,
no more mommy, daddy,
church,
no more life.

Stolen like a precious gem,
"Like a thief in the night," He came.
Her parent, patient as saints, wonder
not why or who
but what they must have done to
inflict such punishment.

I want to hold them up to the light
in offering to the God, not who did this
horrific act, but,
to honor the God who saved this girl.

The flesh and blood of a holy man was saved
from the bitter world of no morale,
where children kill children and
grown men find passion in babies too weak
to fight and too strong to let go.

So, now that you're gone Sara,
I pray that your angelic spirit
will cross over into the consciousness of man.
Help us, Sara,
to heal and forget
the hate.

By Laurie Trombley

I Am Dying Slowly

I am dying slowly, until I hear that familiar knock at my door. When I ask, "Who?" He replies me. I inhale as I open the door. He steps into the apartment with a smile on his face. I smile as he passes. I frown behind his back as I close the door.

He sits down for a moment as I go and get my pocketbook. I give him some money. He says, "thank you" and rises to leave. I walk him to the door and lock it. I walk over to the window as I watch him walk to the corner. As he turns the corner, a vagrant appears. I have to take a second look, I thought it was him returning. I can't remember when I started thinking of him as a vagrant. At this point, that is not important.

I beg him to let me help him, he refuses. I explain to him that I love him.

Sometimes, I don't hear from him for weeks and I wonder whether he is dead or alive. Only when I hear his familiar knock do I know that he is okay. We have an unspoken love.

His lifestyle hurts me, but I am a afraid to quarrel with him. The last time we quarreled, he didn't come by for five months. During that time, my life stood still. He is killing me slowly.

When I hear his familiar knock I feel alive again. I can't turn him away because I am in fear of my sudden death.

By Michele LeeHeung

What Would My Mother Think

On our first date he took me to a movie, dinner, and then to his place. He lived in a loft on Pearl Street in Manhattan, right off Water Street. The movie stunk. The meal was overcooked. But at least he was a good kisser—soft lips. The rest of him wasn't so bad either. He was around 6'3", broad-shouldered, and he had a great butt. Oh yeah, and he was black—my first. We made out on his couch between re-runs of "Cosby" and "A Different World." But that was as far as we got. Unlike the other men I've dated, Tim wasn't in a hurry to jump my bones. I appreciated that. Tim said what I really needed was a friend. I said, "....Deal."

Tim called me nearly everyday. When he didn't call, he sent flowers—either pink roses or African Violets. He was getting to me. But it wasn't what I wanted. I wanted to get married, have kids, the whole bit. Know what I mean? And I couldn't marry Tim. My shrink said it had to do with my low self esteem—takes a healthy ego to handle a mixed marriage. My dear departed mother took whatever self-esteem I had with her into the grave.

Still, I loved Tim, but before him I loved Jerry, Eddie, Jay, Tommy, Lee,— get the picture? What ticks me off, though, is that I had to sleep with these jerks before I realized that they were jerks. But Tim was different. He wanted to take things slow. So we did. For three months we went to movies, plays, horseback riding. He even taught me how to ride a bike. Something my parents never got around to doing.

Then I didn't hear from him for a couple of days, and to my surprise, I started climbing walls. I didn't know what to do with myself. I missed him and left messages on his answering machine telling him so. He came over that night. He had had a cold and didn't want me to catch it. That's why he stayed away. When he arrived, I showed him how much I missed him.

Afterwards, I dreamed we were married, had a house, and a couple of kids—only the house and kids were covered with black and white stripes. Then Tim, the kids, and the house disappeared and were replaced by my mother. She told me that Tim's and my relationship would never work. Then she asked me if I had lost my mind and whatever happened to that nice drug addict you used to date. "Ma!" I screamed. She screamed back, "Well at least he was white!"

I woke up laughing and crying. Tim held me. He lifted me and laid me on top of his chest. His breaths were deep and loud and strong. There in his arms I felt safe...yet afraid.

I don't remember getting the knife. But I did. It was in the bottom drawer of my my nightstand. The knife was my mother's favorite because it rarely needed sharpening. It went in slow, soft—and this whistling sound came out of Tim. It was the sound that woke me. It wouldn't have worked. Like I said, I wanted a house, kids, the whole bit. Besides, what would my mother think? You do understand—don't you doctor?...doctor!

By Orlando Warren

Love and



My Ivy League School by Heidi Goercke

Friendships

“Symbol of Love?”

A bowl full of dried-up petals
and ticket stubs.

Is the symbol of our
relationship of roses and films.

My resolution is to
crush one each day.

My feelings unlike the petals
are blossoming.

No I shall fight it...

Wish feelings were like dried
up petals-crushable in
the palm of my hand.

When the bowl is empty...

Farewell!

By Tina Diaz

Untitled

Night and dying candles
endless melody
rushing through the time
that was left
still
only to remind
that eternal is not
no sense of anything
but bare skin
that is too heavy
to rise
small diamonds spread
all over, reflecting
the mirror who shyly
closed its eyes
all is revealed, but
the souls
have not yet been touched
only too aware
that the aura
is not of love.

By Andrea Mihalovic

Valentine's Greetings

Lawn covered by ice, snow, dead trees, footsteps of friends
in a hurry to reach for the fortune of gifts:

the chocolate-filled hearts,
the Poison-perfumed cards,
the long-awaited letters
from those friends and lovers
from once upon a time,
time...

Afternoon shines green, warm, for the florist next door
and the caterer of wines; for the DJ who speaks
through radio, to love birds,
cuddled, within feathers
and sing "Viva l' amour!",
sing...

But once the day encores,
the lonely heart club meets,
eats the sweets, and intones
"It's just another day,
day."

By Suzannette Lebron

Hurt

A bond breaks
and leaves me shattered.
Pieces to blow upon a whim.
Swept away under
carpets of broken dreams.
Hidden behind sly grins
of arrogance and pride.

By Oni Pendarvis



Saying Good-bye by Meghan Gilroy

Take Me

Your eyes so magnetic
I find it hard to
Stare at you
As you look into
My own soul.
You've touched me
More than I
Can say
I even have
A place for you
In my head/ in my bed.
Your gentle manner
Sends doves to
My hollow heart
And takes me on
A ride of ocean tides
I can cry/ in my bed.
Everything you go
I follow
Everything you touch
I feel
Every word you utter
I hang on to
Take me away/ to your bed.

By Karen Walker

My Distant Love

As I watched her ever so intently, my heart picked up its pace,
I've witnessed the very essence of beauty, charm and grace.
She was sweet, sensuous and shapely with a style all her own,
If I could only live my life with her and build a loving home.

Truly a lady of elegance who sets my heart on fire, to kiss,
caress and love her through the night, is my ultimate desire.
For her love I'd gladly drop to my knees and eat out of the palm of
her hands, just to prove that my love is true without any hidden
plans.

A love without reservation and as far and deep as the sea, though I
may not be the man of her choice, I know she's the
woman for me.

I love her with every beat of my heart, she is my love supreme.
For both our hearts to beat as one, will be my life long dream.
Someday I'll confess my feelings for her, I'll leave it to the Lord
above but when I do, I hope she says that I, too, am her Distant
Love.

By John W. Corry III

I Love You

Why do I always forget to tell you how much you mean to me?
The unspoken word hangs heavily in the air, crowding my mind,
Parading around with pounding drums and clashing symbols,
Until there is no peace.

And then I have to tell you NOW, this second, yesterday,
Before the loudness takes up every space, every corner of my soul,
I want to expel this feeling or I will go mad;
Give it color, shape and form on the outside.

Suddenly I see you again,
The noises quiet down to a murmur,
But I can't make out the dialogue,
Somehow it does not seem so important for you to know:
Until the next time you go away.

By Muriel Greenspan

Till You Come Back

'Till you come back, I will be waiting
for our first encounter in a long, long time;
'till you come back, I will be searching
for a glimpse of your smile, from a look at your picture,
your crystal, brown eyes
confronting, hypnotized, with mine...
'Till you come back, I will be yearning
for your silhouette, which swings like a ghost
over the deep, wide sea
where your wonders dance, where your ship goes by...
where my eyes keep watching for a glimpse
of you, my Adonis, 'till you come back
to my arms...

By Suzannette Lebron

A Wedding Scene

His eyes, smoldering, seductive, seemed to beckon to me from across the room.

He was different than I, and I was warned that with his type, danger always found a place to loom.

Still I was curious, and he could sense that I was eager, willing to learn.

Devour every information, the surreptitious passion in my heart would yearn.

He was older, with regal features, a well sculptured and dynamic face.

His body, skin so taut, rich color as if drenched in deep, dark chocolate, oh my, if only I could taste.

At that point, I felt like the hunted, with him hiding, waiting teasing.

Wanting to get better acquainted, I lost all valuable reasoning.

We could've been one, together

If just now, he didn't make a vow to stay with her forever.

By Sharlene Larmond

Untitled

I. Hidden

Deep in the caverns
of my soul,
I feel the hidden
un-noticed rubies
burning.
Why can't he feel
their heat,
their penetration,
see them shining in my eyes?
I need them to be alchemized,
touched,
felt.
He only touches the
black coals which
paint black on his flesh.
He turns away and says "Ach-du."
All I can say
is,
"God Bless."

II. Spread

The filth which covers
his flesh
and soul
is spread to me
through his words.
I feel the rubies,
He sees the coal.
I am the one left with the mirror
glinting back at me
and I doubt.

I hear the doubt
screaming in my mind
through the songs he sings to me.
"Why can't you be this?"
"Why can't you be that?" he says,
trembling.
"I try," I say softly
yet harshly.
Nothing is ever good enough.
No mind
No soul
No voice
just soft, tender
flesh.
I turn away in self-loathing
and disgust, the rubies burning deep
inside.
He turns toward me,
grinning, feeling no heat,
singing,
"I told you so."

By Laurie Tromley

The Lady They Loved

Old Man: The girl I loved was a rose. I planted her. Yes, planted her with dreams, poured my blood into the earth where she slept, bringing her forth. Filled her I did. Filled her with passion, gentleness, laughter, and yes, even my tears—filled her with every thought. And how did she repay me my friend? She gave me her thorns. I took them, yes, I took them between my teeth, took them and swallowed them whole, while the wind fanned her merciless petals over my wounds.

Young Man: The woman I loved was a dove. She flew into my youth, scattering feathers of hope over the landscape of my pubescent dreams. She took me under her wing and under her—yes, smothering me, nibbling me into happy submission.
Her arms were my cage, her limbs the locks that fastened me. Did I love her? How I loved her! Yet she took the seeds of my youth, devoured them, and left me a husk of a man, rotting in the sun.

Old Man: Yes, my friend, you did know her. God, how she moved.

Young Man: Like water running down a brook.

Old Man: Her mouth.

Young Man: Ripe melons on an arid day.

Old Man: Her eyes.

Young Man: Stars guiding me forever home.

Old Man: Her arms.

Young Man: The only shelter I will ever need.

Old Man: All the above she was to me.

Young Man: And to me.

Old Man: Yet were all her attributes merely illusions to bait us?

Both: Yes!

Young Man: Knowing this about her, would you have her again?

Old Man: Have her resurrect my heart only to mash it beneath her heels? Yes.

Both: Yes!

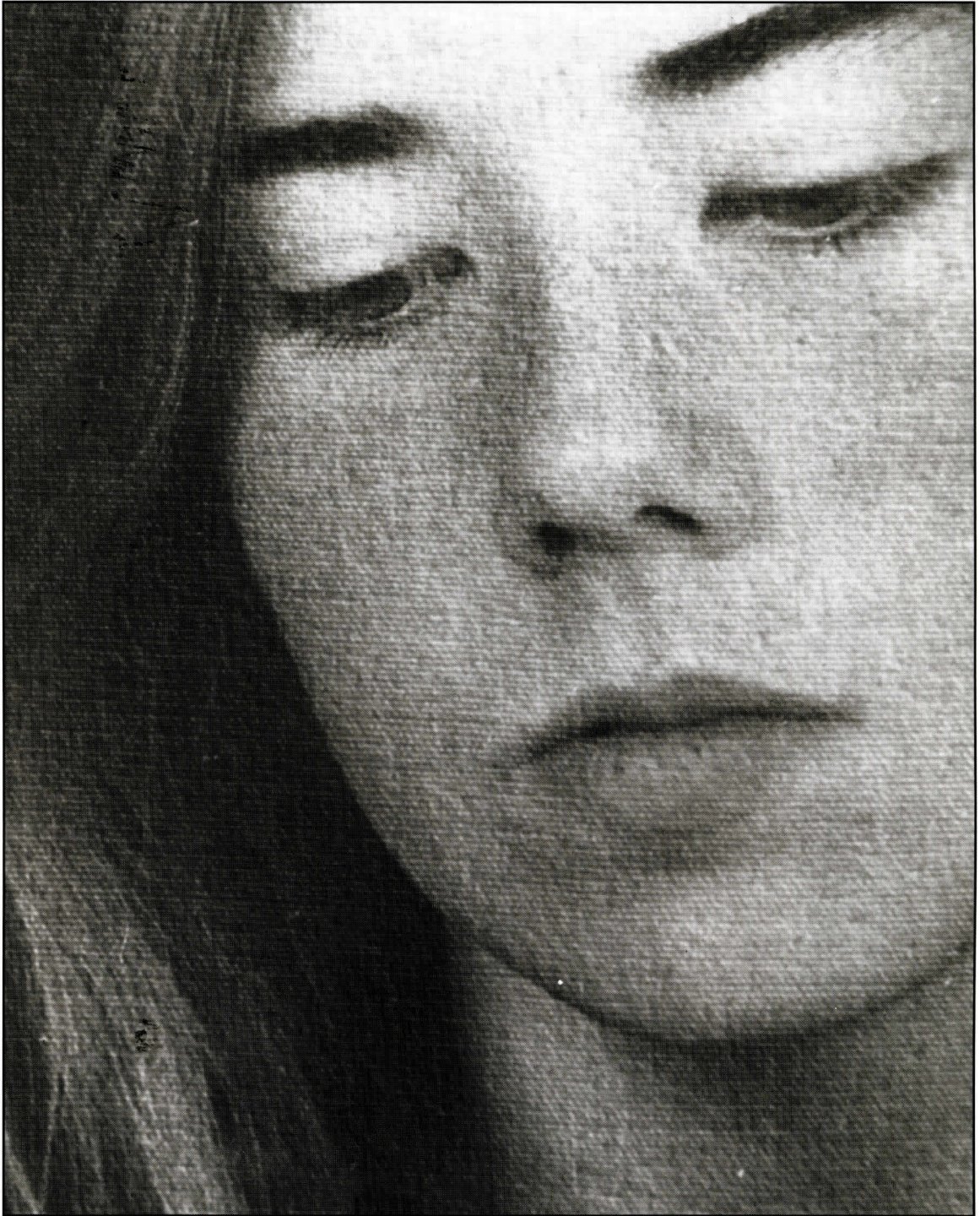
Old Man: The girl I loved was a rose.

Young Man: The woman I loved was a dove.

Both: The lady we loved was a dream. She has destroyed us both, yet out of our ashes we rise new men.

By Orlando Warren

Me, Myself, and I



Untitled by Meghan Gilroy

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Anonymity

*What is the cure for Emptiness?
What is the antidote for Nothingness?
What is the answer to Whatever?
Who does Whenever belong to?
How long must I wait for Whoever?
Does Anything matter?
Is Something really there?
Does Anybody care?
Or is Nobody listening?
But what about Somebody?
If nothing exists, what about me?*

By Katherine Williams



Caught In The Light by Amy Rector

Steam

I'm a lot like a kettle
My exterior is like steel
I built it up so that
No one could break me down.
95% of my interior is
Liquid and sometimes
It boils with joy
And sometimes with anger.
But I am steel
And I am strong
I never cry
I just scream my own song.

By Karen Walker

Warm Words

Warm
words
spoken
to me,
eases
my
mind
for
the day
to
come.
But
alone
I
am
without
warmth
without
another.
Numb
I
am
when sorrow
consumes
me
I
forget
warm
words
spoken
to
me
I
forget
who
I
am.

By Amy Rector

Why Daddy?

Daddy, why did you go? I loved you so much...
All your love for me, where did it go?

All I wanted, was to be by your side, to touch
you and to love you. How can you claim to be my
Daddy, and leave me?

Time after time, I said, "Daddy, I love you!"
Was it true when you said, "I love you!" or were they
silly lies too?

You told me to be strong and wait, and so I did.
Now I'm feeling all this anger and pain.

Now that you have departed, Daddy, I have
no one to turn to. But only the memories that will
remain locked away in my heart.

In your gentle voice you told me, "I promised
myself I wouldn't cry, but it's time to say good-bye,
Muneca."

I remember your soft lips meeting mine, then I
remember your hand waving good-bye.

As I think of saying good-bye, tears begin to fall
down my eyes, so good-bye Daddy of mine...

Thanks for the joy and memories and the
pictures that captured the happiness that once
was.

Many times I still ask myself, "How could this
be?" But now I must keep on, even though there's
only "ME!"...

Good-bye Daddy....
Love Always,
Lyvett...

By Lyvett Elizabeth Velazquez

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Other



Shaken Trees by Heidi Goercke

Dimensions

4/5/00

4/5/00

Farrukh

*Her half-cycle moon cries upon amniotic seas
(wading pools of skeleton shadows creeping,
creeping towards imagined heavenly ceilings)*

*Her half-cycle moon swirls upon music box stages
(Porcelain prisons of enslaved women tearing,
tearing down the violet curtain of the night sky)*

*Her half-cycle moon is mummy-wrapped in
cheesecloth
(woven noose fibers swinging from boughs bleeding,
bleeding their lives into swollen moon rivers)*

*Farrukh's half-cycle moon wanes,
as the womb-world silver ladles her essence
into the sea of death: grave of floating skeletons.*

By Bushra Rehman



Untitled by Amy Rector

Study of an Elevation of the Missing Link

*Or, Potiphar Gubbins, P.C.
(with apologies to Rudyard Kipling)*

*Potiphar Gubbins, p.c.
Has a career ahead of him, worry-free;
And I shiver and shake as I'm lying awake
Knowing the world belongs to him as it can
Never belong to me.*

*Potiphar Gubbins, p.c.
In business, government, or university
Cheats, flatters and fakes
And his position he makes
Secure against rivals like me.*

*Potiphar Gubbins, p.c.
Legislates niceness but knows not courtesy,
And I can't understand how he leads them in hand
That hypocrite, Potiphar G.*

*Potiphar Gubbins, p.c.
Is dear to the Powers that Be,
And they fawn and they smile at every correctness of style,
While plotting behind our backs, you see.*

*Potiphar Gubbins, p.c.
Amasses wealth, but claims poverty.
He holds a highly-paid post
As one of a host
Of politically-correct bureaucracy.*

*Though praising loudly the ideal of Equality,
He fancies himself far superior to me.
What is the spell that you manage so well,
Commonplace Potiphar G.?*

*Oh, great Powers that Be;
Let me inquire of thee,
Should I have risen to where Potiphar is
Hadst I been so "p.c."?*

By Laura C.F. Brose

Main Street USA

Walking down Main Street USA

*All those young blacks standing in the way
They are rapping and talking jive
Gulping malt liquor and slapping five.*

Walking down Main Street USA

*They always got something to say,
Hey pretty Moma, what's happening babe?
You sho' look fine, you've got it made.*

Walking down Main Street USA

*Things just happening both night and day.
The sound of a gunshot and the swish of a blade,
some even believe they are shot gun slade.*

*On Main Street USA, those blacks are hopeless, they say,
but I heard God through Jesus say,
tell those young folk, there is a better way.
Hope instead of dope is the thing to do,
and Jesus and me will come and live in you.*

If you want real joy

*Throw away that nine millimeter toy,
or you'll be killing somebody's boy.
Sleek BMWs and bad Mercedes are fine,
but one quick bust and it's the end of the line.*

*Drugs, booze, and sex is the wrong way to go,
you get old before your time and wrinkles will show.
If before the judge, no mercy he'll know,
just twenty years and a day, from the bench he'll go.*

By Melvin J. Rountree



Untitled by Meghan Gilroy

Through a Tunnel and Backwards

The MetroNorth
September 22, 1993

*Sickly orange spheres of light, phosphorescent
worms twist within,
vomit seeps between ruined civilizations, worm-
eaten pillars.*

*Disjointed heap of woman flesh, pupils dilate, lips
quiver:
"John, I love you more than life...more than life..."*

*Rats procreate within shadows, hollows darkened
with funk scents,
tubular lights stretch through tunnels, rushed
retinas collapse.*

*Kohl in the eyes, outlined shadows, orange slips
through grey:
"But the way you treat me...you don't love me...don't
love me."*

*Bitten lips within opaque glass, shuddering
reflections, images,
shook by worn passages of the mind, dark passages
of time.*

By Bushra Rehman

Storm

*The thriving force of a midnight
rain storm
pounds through my veins.
Awakening every nerve.
Pulsating at the core of me.
Becoming all I am.
All that I will be.
All that I want,
and all that I live for.
The very passion of the tempest,
the sensuality of it, writhing
through my soul.
The explosion and vibration
stimulating my existence.
While the glow
illuminates my secrets.
Don't end and leave me half alive,
the echo of life,
a whisper of harmony.
Wash me continuously
in your essence.
Shower me forever
in your reality.*

By Oni Pendarvis

Time

*It is time to make the right decision
It is time to learn to read and write
It is time plan our lives together
It is time to be more concerned*

*It is time to stop the hate
It is time to love each other
Because each man is our brother*

*It is time to laugh and sing
It is time to watch and pray
It is time for us all
To move towards a brighter day*

By Esther Matthew

A Need to Sit

*There is a need to sit,
 To watch the world go by,
 To see the knowledge fly.*

*There is a need to sit,
 To think about your life,
 To contemplate your strife.*

*There is a need to sit,
 To understand all of the wonder,
 To choke on someone's thunder.*

*There is a need to sit,
 To take time into our own hands,
 To heal the sores of our open lands.*

*There is a need to sit,
 To look in on ourselves,
 To keep our hearts from off the shelves.*

*There is a need to sit,
 To observe families in motion,
 To sort out everyone else's notion.*

*There is a need to sit,
 To listen to the voices on fire,
 To hope for life after the pyre.*

*There is a need to sit,
 To make a grander scale,
 To destroy the difference between dark and pale.*

*There is a need to sit,
 To quiet our restless hearts,
 To figure out what are our parts.*

*There is a need to sit,
 To gaze at all that is offered,
 To receive all those who have suffered.*

*There is a need to sit,
 To color in the shades of grey,
 To reach towards Heaven and pray.*

*There is a need to sit,
To await a new dawn,
To pick up the spilt ink from which it is drawn.
There is a need to sit,
To scream for no reason,
To stop the rotation of every season.
There is a need to sit,
To search for the answers in a book,
To regain everything that the pain took.
There is a need to sit,
To count the bad remembrances,
To savor and hold on to all the sweet dances.
There is a need to sit,
To read the words on the wall,
To hear the cry of the people's call.
There is a need to sit,
To collect a thought and make a memory,
To gather the memories to be.
There is a need to sit,
To find out all there is to know,
To feel an omniscient glow.
There is a need to sit,
To stop the world from spinning,
To start over from the beginning.
There is a need to sit,
To steal most of the glory,
To write one last story.
There is a need to sit,
To freely live as we should,
To wish that we could.*

By Jeannine Nault

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Notes and Observations

Notes and Observations

10/10/10

10/10/10

Autographs and Comments from Authors

Autographs and Comments from Authors

10/10/10

10/10/10

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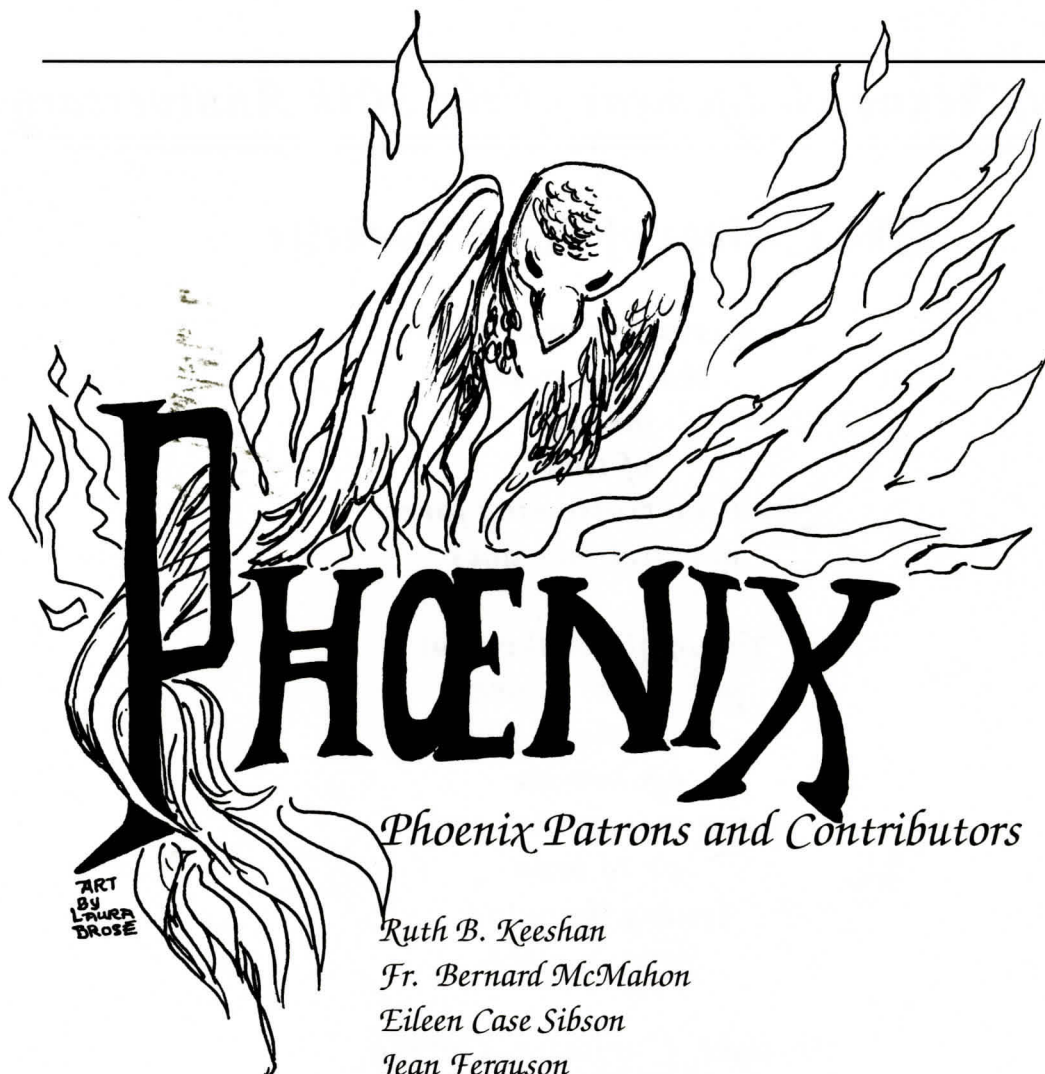
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*A creative endeavor
that has stood
the test
of time
Seedling blossoming forest
parallel messages*

*Young girls take root
grow into women
able to stand firm
against the
many storms that come
or to bend
letting the wind
have its way*

*Insight, Curiosity, Caring
branches that grow
providing a helping hand
Introspection, Exploration
Justice
Values that
have taken root
foundation and growth
connection*

By Kathleen Jones



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